

# Protection of Tribal Cultural Practices through the Development of Native American Exposure Pathways



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# Introduction

Project represents a Direct  
Implementation Tribal Cooperative  
Agreement (DITCA) Between EPA and:

- Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians
- Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians
- Passamaquoddy Tribe Indian Township
- Passamaquoddy Tribe Pleasant Point
- Penobscot Indian Nation

# Maine Indian Tribe Demographics

- 6,000+ enrolled Tribal members in Maine
- Total Tribal land holdings in Maine include 285,000+ acres of land
- Land holdings include wetlands, uplands, farmland, developed land, and frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and the Atlantic Ocean

## The Problem

- Maine Tribal cultural practices are inextricably linked to water resources (food, medicine, spiritual, recreational)
- Protection of water resources is therefore necessary to protect the health of Tribal members and Tribal cultural practices
- However, no water quality standards for Tribal lands in Maine currently exist

## Purpose of Project

To document Tribal cultural practices and resource utilization patterns of the five Maine Indian Tribes through the development of multi-pathway exposure scenarios to support the development of appropriate water quality standards for Tribal lands

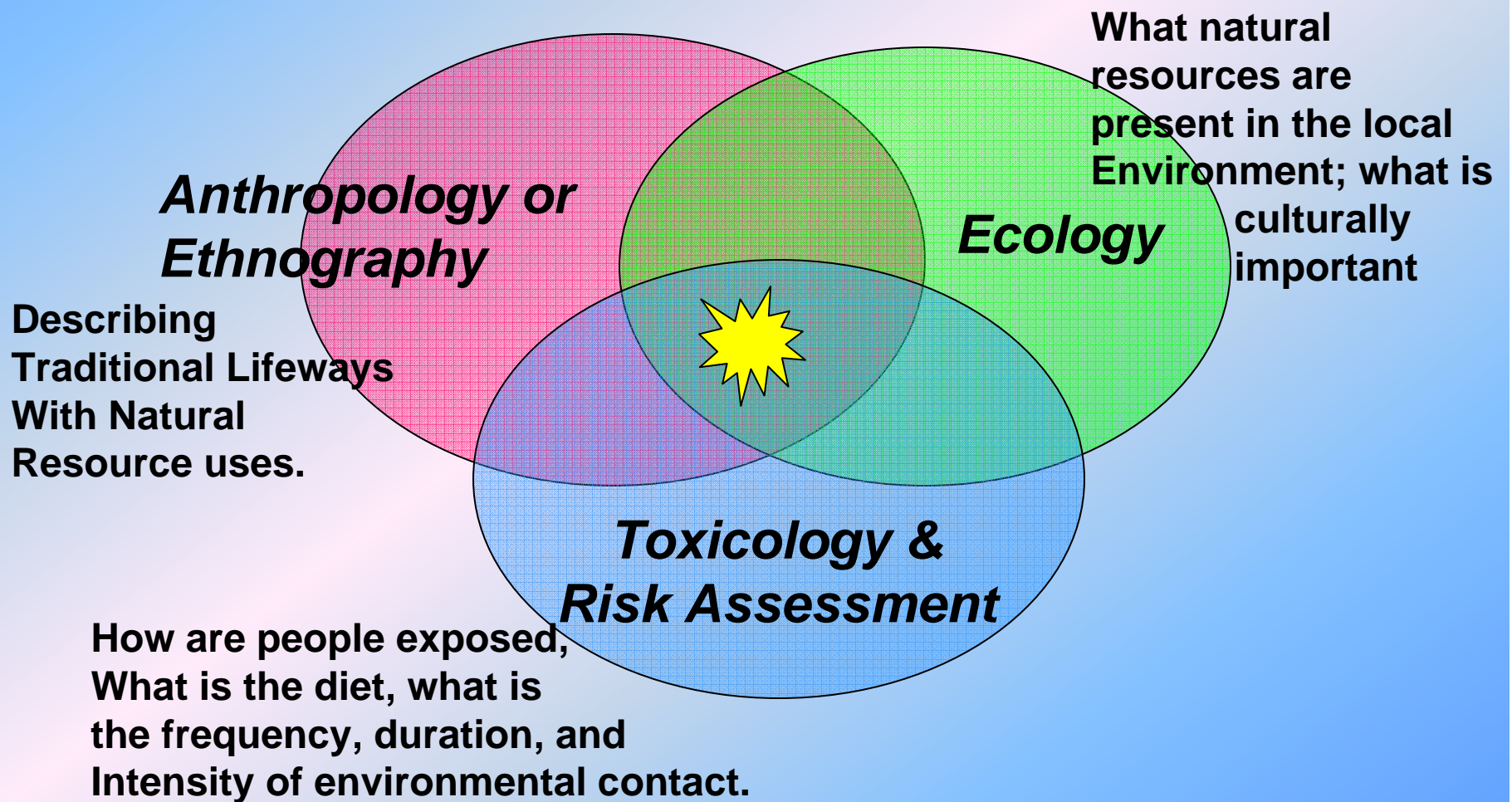
## Approach

- Combines some elements of consumption surveys (interviewing Tribal elders) but relies heavily upon anthropological research to determine historical Tribal natural resource utilization patterns
- Legally defensible / scientifically sound
- Data confidentiality important

# Consumption Survey Issues

- Suppressed consumption associated with fish consumption advisories, land use constraints, depleted natural resources, social oppression and economic factors
- Does not include increased exposures associated with subsistence lifestyle (increased caloric intake, respiration, sediment ingestion rates, etc.)

# Tribal Scenarios or Exposure Factors are at the intersection of three areas:



Slide by Dr. Barbara Harper



## Expected Results

Tribal exposure scenarios indicative of freshwater and marine natural resource utilization patterns will be developed to support the development of appropriate water quality standards that will support and sustain cultural traditions of the Maine Tribes, including the use of natural resources for food, medicine, and spiritual use

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